

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-08 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-07 /080 W
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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6309

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7663

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN, PINT, KS, US

SUBJECT: KOREAN PRESS REPORTS ON DEFEAT OF CAPUTO AMENDMENT

SUMMARY: KOREAN PRESS SATURDAY MORNING GIVES DEFEAT OF CAPUTO AMENDMENT SECOND BILLING. IMPLICATIONS OF NARROW MARGIN OF AMENDMENT'S DEFEAT SEEM TO BE SINKING IN HERE. END SUMMARY.

1. ON SEPTEMBER 10, BOTH MORNING VERNACULAR PAPERS GAVE FRONT-PAGE, SECOND BILLING TO AP WIRE SERVICE STORY ON DEFEAT OF TWO AMENDMENTS (CAPUTO AND JACOBS) WHICH SOUGHT TO ELIMINATE (ECONOMIC) AID TO KOREA IN CONNECTION WITH THE PAK TONG-SON CASE. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PAPERS CARRIED SLIGHTLY FULLER VERSIONS (ONE WAS AP, THE OTHER UPI STORY), BUT EVEN KOREAN VERSIONS INCLUDED EXPRESSION OF REGRET OVER KOREA'S "LACK OF COOPERATION" BY SPEAKER O'NEILL AND "OTHER IMPORTANT LEGISLATORS." CHOSON ILBO INCLUDED CAPUTO'S CHARACTERIZATION OF HIS AMENDMENT AS A MEASURE "TO INDUCE REASONABLE COOPERATION." HAN'GUK ILBO RAN A SECOND ARTICLE FROM WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT CHO SUN-HWAN ON PRESS REACTION IN WASHINGTON STAR AND POST. CHO'S ACCOUNT SAYS STAR INTERPRETED PAK'S RECENT PRESS CONFERENCE

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AS HINTING THAT PAK MIGHT EVENTUALLY RETURN TO U.S. AND GOES ON TO NOTE STAR'S QUOTING CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES' INTERPRETATION THAT NARROW MARGIN BY WHICH CAPUTO AMENDMENT DEFEATED INDICATES MOOD OF CONGRESS TO PUT PRESSURE ON KOREA. BRIEF FINAL PARAGRAPH ON POST'S TREATMENT MENTIONS USE OF "NARROW MARGIN" AS HEADLINE FOR CAPUTO AMENDMENT STORY AND POST EDITORIAL STATEMENT THAT PROBLEM IN PAK CASE IS THAT U.S. PUBLIC SUPPORT

FOR DEFENSE OF KOREA WILL BE REDUCED.

2. COMMENT: HEIGHTENED INTEREST IN THE EFFECTS OF THE PAK TONG-SUN CASE ON THE PART OF SUCH FREQUENT EMBASSY CONTACTS AS JCS DIRECTOR YU PYONG-HYON (IN CONVERSATION WITH DCM SEPTEMBER 9) AND MOFA ASSISTANT MINISTER YI MUN-YONG (DURING CALL BY EA.K DIRECTOR ROBERT RICH SEPTEMBER 10) INDICATE THAT THE IMPORT OF THE CLOSE VOTE ON THE CAPUTO AMENDMENT HAS NOT BEEN LOST ON INFLUENTIAL FIGURES IN THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT. IN CONVERSATION WITH POLCOUNS SEPTEMBER 9, MOFA AMERICAN BUREAU DIRECTOR PAK SANG-YONG ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT NARROW MARGIN OF CAPUTO AMENDMENT VOTE. CONVERSATION WITH YI, HOWEVER, ALSO LEAVES IMPRESSION THAT ROKG HAS AS YET NOT FOUND LEGAL WAY TO RE-SOLVE PROBLEM OF GETTING PAK TONG-SUN TO RETURN TO U.S. SNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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